

DYING-MANS

Last Sermon,

O R,

The Fathers Last Blessing,

Left and bequeathed as a Legacy to his Children, immediately before his death,

Being comfortable Meditations and preparations for the day of death: which for the worth of them are more worthy to be written in letters of gold, than Ink and Paper.

By *Andrew Jones*, a servant of Jesus Christ.

Job 14. 1, 2. Man that is born of a Woman is of few days and full of trouble. He comes forth like a flower and is cut down; he flyeth as a shadow, and continueth not.

L O N D O N,

Printed for W. Thackeray, T. Passinger,
P. Brooksby, and J. Williamson. 1680.



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THE
FATHERS

Last Blessing,

Left and bequeathed as a Legacy un-
to his Children, a little before his
Death.

The Life of a Christian is, or e-
ther should be a continued daily
meditation, or a preparation
for the day of his Death. The
first man living was called Adam, Gen. 2.
which in the Original signifies a clod of red
Earth: and he was arrayed and cloathed by
God with the skins of dead Beasts, and ab-
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judged to the Earth to dig and delbe in it, God would have his very Name, his Apparel, his Employments, to be continuall remembrances of his Original, and premonitours of his mortality, O that men were wise, that they understood this, that they would remember their latter end! For whatsoever a Mans Wisdom, Birth, Beauty, Strength, or State be, his foundation is in the dust: Dust thou art, and unto dust thou shalt return, Gen. 3. 19. There seems to be a vast difference between a Cedar and a Shrub, a Vine and a Bramble, so long as they both grow together, but cut them down and burn them, and their Ashes will be one and the same. In this Mortal life some men sit on the Throne, others are grinding at the Mill; some go cloathed in Purple, and fare deliciously every day as Dives did, and others like Lazarus, lie at rich mens Gates, and have not so much as the crumbs of their table: but in the grave there is no difference, there the Poor and rich are all one: The Worms feed as well on Rich Dives, as on poor Lazarus, Kings and Emperors must submit to Death, and lay down their Crowns and Scepters at the Grave.

The

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The Daughters of Jerusalem, as the Prophet Isaiah saith in the third Chapter and Sixteenth verse; Which walk with stretched forth Necks, and w-m-on enticing Eyes, mincing as they go, and making a tinkling with their Feet, must at last drop into the Grave. And they that glory in the nobleness of their Birth and blood must make their Beds in the Dust, and acknowledge Corruption for their Father and the Worms for their Mother. Why then should sinful Dust and Ashes be Proud? For we brought nothing with us into the World, and it is most certain we shall carry nothing with us out of the World, as the Apostle saith, 1 Tim. 6. 7. And Holy Job saith, Job 1. 21. Naked came we out of our Mothers Womb, and naked shall we return, &c. And the Apostle saith, Heb. 9. 27. It is appointed for all men once to dye. There is nothing more certain than death, and yet nothing more uncertain: Most certain it is we must all dye, but when, where or how we must dye, that is altogether uncertain.

We read in the Scripture that all the Fathers dyed, Gen. 5. Adam the first Man dyed; and Methuselah the oldest Man, he

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died, also Abraham the friend of God, and
 Father of all the Faithful, he dyed; as you
 may read, Gen. 25. 8. And Abraham gave
 up the Ghost, and dyed in a good old Age,
 an old Man and full of years, David, a Man
 after Gods own Heart, who triumphed over
 all the Hosts of the Philistines, and slew Go-
 liath, 1 Sam. 17. 49. yet was overcome by
 death: as you may read, 1 Kings 2. 10. And
 Solomon the Wisest man, was constrain-
 ed to submit unto Death, as you may see,
 1 Kings 11. 43. And Moses the Seruant of
 the Lord, he dyed, Deut. 34. 5. And what
 Man is he that Liveth and shall not see
 Death? for as Wise-Men dye, (saith the
 Psalmist, Psalm 49. 10.) so likewise the
 fool and the brutish Person. We are, like
 the Disciples, run fast, who shall come first
 to the Sepulchre. We are no longer born,
 but we begin to dye. Man that is born of a
 Woman is of few days, he cometh forth
 like a flower, and is cut down, Job 14. 1, 2.
 In the morning they grow up and flourish,
 in the Evening they are cut down and wi-
 thered, saith Moses, Psa. 90. 9. and holy
 Job saith, There is an appointed time for
 man upon Earth, and God hath set bounds,
 beyond which he cannot pass, Job 7. 1.

At

The Father. Let us sing.

At the end of his appointed time he must dye ; yet the time when is very uncertain, as also the manner how : for one dyeth in full strength, and another in the bitterness of his Soul : God will have us ignorant of the day of our death, that we may be ready every day. We are but Tenants at will, and know not how soon our great Lord and Landlord may eject us. Death surprised Abel in the field, Gen. 4. 8. Ely sitting at the door, 1 Sam. 4. 18. and Jobs Children at feasting, Job 1. 18. Herod sitting on his Throne, Acts 12. 33. And as death it self is uncertain, so is the manner also uncertain ; there is a natural death, & there is a violent death : a natural Death is when a man as a Lamp goeth out, because there is no more oyl left to feed it, and a violent death is when the soul is as it were thrust out of the body by some untimely accident. There is a timely Death, when a man comes to his growth, in a full age, as a shock of Corn cometh in his season, which every godly man doth, though he dye never so soon, or never so young : And there is also an untimely Death ; (that is) when a man is reapt or cut off as an ear of Corn before it be Harvest : And there is a lingering death when the soul

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soul is besieged with sickness, and so starved out of his Habitation. And there is a sudden Death which strikes without giving warning, from which the Lord deliver us. And there is also a quiet Death, a departing in peace, when the soul doth as it were, steal out of the body.

Josiah he dyes by the wound of an arrow, 2 Chron. 35. 23. Abimelech by the fall of a stone, Judges 9. 53. Wicked proud Jezabel is eaten up of Dogs, 2 Kings 9. 36. There are thousands of casualties and diseases, and no man living knoweth what shall be his end; For unto God the Lord belongeth the issues of death, Psal. 68. 26. There is but one way into the world, but there is a thousand ways out of the World: and we may all say of Death as David to Ahimaas, he is a good man, and bringeth good tidings.

For first the Death of the body frees us from the body of death, the remainders of corruption.

Secondly, the death of the body frees us from the misery and incumbrances of this Life. So many are the miseries and afflictions of this Life, that were it not for the hope of Heaven, it would be worse than Hell it self; crosses and afflictions come as fast upon

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upon us as Jobs Messengers. The Life of Man is like a Winters day, short and very cloudy: Few and evil are the days of this Life, Gen. 45. 9. Man that is born of a woman is but of few days and full of trouble, Job 14. 1, 2. Lastly, death translates us from a Prison to a Palace, from a Scaffold to a Paradise, from a vale of Miseries to a Kingdom of Glory, where God shall wipe away all tears from our eyes, Rev. 2. 4. Where there shall be no more death, nor sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain, where we shall be perfectly free from all sin; therefore may we say with Solomon, Better is the dead than the Living: and with St. Paul, To me to live is Christ, and to dye is gain, Phil. 1. 21.

Every man with Balaam desires to dye the death of the Righteous, Numb. 23. 10. and in this they desire well: For to dye well is a point of the highest concernment in the world, because either eternal life, or eternal death depends upon it; for as the tree falls so shall it lye. But to dye well is not attainable, unless we have first learnt the art of living well: A fair day may have a foul Evening, but a good life cannot have a bad death; for as David saith, 1 Sal. 37. 37.

Mark

The Turners last Blessing

Mark the perfect man, and behold the upright, for the end of that man is peace: therefore it is good always to be in readines for death; and whensoever the Will of the Lord is, willingly and cheerfully to submit unto it: for it is written Rev. 14. 13. Blessed be the dead which dye in the Lord, they rest from their Labours, and their Works do follow them. And if we be dead in Christ, we shall also rise with Christ, Rom. 6. 8. For when Christ who is our Life shall appear, then shall we appear also in glory, Col. 3. 4.

And now my Son, as I have leisure and opportunity enough, so have I cause more than enough to meditate and prepare for Death. I bless God, neither my prosperity nor my adversity hath made me a stranger to the thoughts of mortality: for meditating on, and preparing for death, is never unreasonable, although the time and manner of Death be always even uncertain: I bless God I am not so old, as to be weary of life, nor so bad as to be either afraid to dye, or ashamed to live; my afflictions make me even sometimes desire to dye; but when I consider that it is the Glorie of a Christian to dye daily, I desire to conquer
Death

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Death by Faith, and hopes of a better life :
 Blessed be God, I can look upon the sting
 of death as unpoisonous, althougħ it may
 be sharp, because I know my Redeemer Je-
 sus Christ hath taken it away by his death.
 I can say, and that truly, I never found so
 much life of Religion, the feast of a good
 Conscience, as I have done since I came
 to converse so nearly with the thought of
 Death. I do wholly desire to depend upon
 God, and submit to his Will; both in life
 and Death. I shall not think my life too
 long or too tedious, if God by prolonging
 it, shall be pleased to give me fresh oppor-
 tunity to do good thereby, neither shall I
 think my death too soon, whensoever the
 Will of the Lord is to call for me: it is my
 honour and my exceeding great comfort that
 I can goe as willingly to my grave as to a
 Bed of Down, or Roses; the Will of God
 hath constrained and concluded my will, I shall
 have Pleasure in dying: for Death cannot
 deprive me of more than I am willing to
 lose when God sees it fit, whose mercy I am
 confident will abundantly reward my loss
 with the Joys of Heaven.

My Son, the God of Heaven and Earth
 be thy Portion: these are my last Words,
 for

for now the time is come, that I must
leade this World and go to a better; h
thereto as a Father have I protected and di
rected you; but now my time being come,
my days being but of a span long, I must
go hence, and shall be no more seen, Psal
39. 13. See therefore that ye serve the
Lord with all singleness and uprightness
of heart in Godly sincerity, and he will be
a Father unto thee in my stead. Keep a
good Conscience all the days of thy Life,
do to others, as thou wouldst have others
do to thee; For that is the Law and the
Prophets, saith our blessed Saviour, Matt.
7. 12. And then when the time shall come
(which although you be young now, you
know not how near it may lodge at this
present: for many are living now, that
must dye to Morrow, who would weep if
they knew they had so short a time to live)
that when you shall lye upon your Death
bed, death may not affrighten you, but may
appear unto you, as blessed be God it doth
now unto me, not in his ugly shapes and
deformities, but singleless as a friend; thus
shall you have comfort within you, that
shall reforce you when all outward Com
forts fail you; then every pain you feel
shall

shall be but as a pleasure unto you : because
it shall prevent the Pains of Hell : then
the Grave shall not appear loathsome unto
you, but sweet because it was the Lords
Bed. I bless God, I find the truth of this
upon my own soul ; and O that the mercies
of God to me , might move you and all
others to love him, and to serve him to your
li ves end. And I charge thee before God,
before whom I am presently to appear,
that thou honour God above all things day-
ly and principally : let him be thy fear and
let him be thy dread, let him be thy coun-
sellour, the joy and delight of thy Soul :
and be sure thou set God always before
thy face so will he be a Lanthorn to thy
feet, & a guide to thy paths. Labour strong-
ly to suppress vice, and exalt vertue, strive
to be in love with goodness, remember that
thou must give an account for each idle
hour, and every idle Word, as our Sa-
viour saith, Matt. 12. 36. Let all thy acti-
ons then proceed from a good conscience,
for thou shalt never thrive by such ways
and means as God hath accursed; for that
is a miserable gain that is gotten by the
loss of the Soul : for what shall it profit a
man to gain the whole World, and lose his
own

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own soul, Mat. 16. 26. We always the same
in the sight of God, for he seeth all mens actions,
be they never so secret, as thou appearest
to be in the sight of men. Take heed thou
gibest no aid nor assistance to any wicked
words or works: neither countenance wicked
men in the least with thy company; for
the faults of those whom thou favourst
will be imputed to thee. Be not a follower
of those that enrich themselves by unjust
gain, for it is better to be poor with honesty,
than rich by wickedness: account that day
lost in which thou hast not done or learnt
some good. Be more careful to keep thy
word than thy money: acquaint thy self
with such as are good and Vertuous: look
upon every thing here below as very uncertain,
so shalt thou not rejoyce overmuch in
thy prosperity, nor be over sad or dismayed in
adversity. And what counsel I give thee
here for the present, be sure thou treasure it
up in store for the time to come.

My Son, (saith Solomon, Prov. 1, &c.) hear
the instructions of thy father: hear ye children
the instructions of a father, and attend
to know understanding, then shalt thou
understand the fear of the Lord, and find the
know-

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knowledg of God : then shalt thou understand righteousness, judgment, and equity, yea every good path ; walk in the way of good men, and keep the paths of the righteous ; for the upright shall dwell in the Land, and the perfect shall remain in it. But the wicked shall be cut off from the earth , and transgressours shall be rooted out. Let not mercy and truth forsake thee , bind them about thy neck, write them on the Tables of thy heart, so shalt thou find favour and good understanding in the sight of God and Man. Trust in the Lord with all thy heart, and lean not to thy understanding. In all thy ways acknowledg him, and he shall direct thy paths ; happy is the man that finds wisdom, that getteth understanding, for the Merchandize of it is better than silver, and the gain thereof than fine Gold. She is more pretious than Rubies, her ways are ways of pleasantness, and all her paths are peace. She is a Tree of life to them that lay hold on her, and happy is every one that retains her. My Son, keep sound Wisdom and Discretion, and let it not depart from thine eyes, so shall it be life to thy soul, and grace to thy neck : then shalt thou walk in thy way safely, and thy

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foot shall not stumble. When thou lyeſt down thou ſhalt not be afraid, for the Lord ſhall be thy confidence. With-hold not good from them to whom it is due, when it is in the power of thy hand to do it. Enter not into the path of the wicked, go not in the way of wicked men; avoid it, paſs not by it, turn from it, and paſs away, turn not to the right hand, nor to the left: remove thy foot from evil, be not over haſty to get Riches, but conſider it is the Bleſſing of the Lord that maketh rich, and he addeth no ſorrow to it. Let not thine heart envy ſinners, but be thou in the fear of the Lord all the day. Be not among Wine-bibbers, nor among riotous eaters of fleſh, for the Drunkard and the Glutton ſhall come to poverty, and drowſineſs ſhall cloath a man with Rags. Look not upon the Wine when it is red, when it giveth its colour in the Cup; for at the laſt it ſtingeth like a Serpent. Deviſe not evil againſt thy Neighbour, for he that deviſeth to do evil ſhall be called a miſchievous perſon: Rejoyce not when thy enemy falls, and let not thine heart be glad when he ſtumbleth, leſt the Lord ſee it, and it diſpleaſe him; give not thy ſtrength unto Women, nor thy words to
that

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that which destroyeth Kings. It is not for Kings to drink wine, nor Princes strong drink; lest they drink and forget the Law. Open thy Mouth for the Dumb, open thy Mouth; judge Righteously, and plead the cause of the poor and needy. Say not thou, What is the cause that the former dayes were better than these; for thou dost not wisely imagine concerning that, but consider the work of the Lord; for who can make that straight, which he hath made crooked, Eccl. 7. 10. 13.

And further, my Son, I would have thee to consider seriously of what I have said, and remember this as the last words of the dying father: Fear God and keep his commandments, for this is the whole duty of man: for God will bring every work into judgement, with every secret thing, whether it be good, or whether it be evil, Eccles. 12. 13, 14.

Thus having briefly admonished thee in the words of the wise Man I shall spend out my last breath in a word or two more, and I have done: it is some refreshment to my fainting spirits to consider how you have begun & spent some years in the experience of troubles, & exercise of patience, & indeed I had

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rather

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rather you should be good and afflicted, than great & joyous in the world; I hope God hath designed you to both, having so early put you on the exercise of his Graces, faith, love and patience, which only will dispose you to those princely endowments & improvements that may gain you the love and favour of all those that fear the Lord. With God I would have you begin, & with God I would have you end; you have begun well, the Lord bless you, go on & prosper, piety will make you prosperous, at least it will keep you from being miserable: Godliness is profitable unto all things, having the promise of the life that now is, and of the life to come, 1 Tim. 4. 8. For is he much a loser that loseth all, yet saveth his own soul: I trust you have already tasted of that bitter cup whereof I have so deeply drunk. Above all I would have you, as I hope you are already, well grounded and settled in religion, & the way of God, in which I charge you to persevere; for unless you be well grounded & settled in religion, you shall never want temptations to destroy you: Therefore take heed of a herring any faction whatsoever, for I have observed, that the Devil of Rebellion doth turn himself commonly into an Angel of light, and reformation: when some
men

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mens consciences accuse them with Sediti-
on and Heresie, they like the old Serpent
pretend new light, & stop its mouth with the
name & noise of religion; & when piety pleads
for peace & patience, then they cry out Zeal,
Zeal: be sure always to keep up a well-
grounded Piety, and such Fundamental
Truths, as mend both hearts and lives of
most men; & with an equal eye and impartial
hand, distribute competent rewards to such
as by well-doing shall deserve them, which
will undoubtedly gain you both the hearts
and favours of the best, yea, and the most too,
who though they be not good themselves, will
be glad to see the works of Vertue sweetned
by tempo. al rewards.

And once more I do require you, & intreat
you as a father, as a dying father, that you
never suffer your heart to receive the least
dissatisfaction to the truth of religion now es-
tablished which I have by experience found
to be the best in the world, and nearest agre-
ing to the word of God. Happy times I hope
will attend you. The Lord bless you and esta-
blish your soul in righteousness, that as you
grow in years, so you may grow also in wis-
dom & goodness, in grace & favour both with
God & Man. The Lord bless you & make his
face

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face to shine upon you. And now behold I am ready to be offered up, & the time of my departure is at hand, I bless God I can say as as St. Paul did, 2 Tim. 3. 7, 8. I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith; henceforth therefore there is laid up for me a Crown of righteousness, which the Lord the righteous judge shall give me at that day, and not to me only, but to all them also that love his appearing. And now I leave you and go before you to a better Kingdom, an inheritance that is incorruptible and undefiled, that fadeth not away, 1 Pet. 1. 4. which the Lord hath prepared for me, and me for it, through the only and alone Merits of my only and all-sufficient Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ; to whose blessed Protection and mercy I commend and leave you: and so farewell till we meet if not on Earth, yet in Heaven.

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FINIS.

The Christians Blessed CHOICE,

26 60